

D 16  
.2  
.05  
Copy 1











# LECTURE

ON

## THE STUDY OF HISTORY,

APPLIED TO

THE PROGRESS OF CIVILIZATION:

DELIVERED, BY APPOINTMENT,

BEFORE

THE UNION LITERARY SOCIETY,

MAY 2, 1839.

..

---

WASHINGTON:

BLAIR AND RIVES, PRINTERS.

1839.





D16  
.2  
I5

## LECTURE

ON THE

*Study of history, applied to the progress of civilization.*

---

GENTLEMEN:

Of all organized beings, man alone enjoys the consciousness of ages that have preceded his existence; and with him dwell upon this earth millions of creatures who can trace back the annals of the universe to one day, one hour of antiquity. His is the peculiar power to classify all the events that mark the progress of his species over the earth, in the immense scale of human ages and human destinies; whilst, in his complex nature, he feels and acknowledges, within himself, the combined workings of centuries. Alone he knows that, before he was born, beings, similar to himself, unconsciously prepared the place which he occupies in the pageantry of time. Alone he knows that he is fated to die; and that every thing, which surrounds, will survive him—both the universe, in the midst of which he is throned, and humanity itself, of which he is an integral part. What shall be the forms that may be reproduced, and what the individuals who shall come after him, he cannot, with safety, previously determine; but he is sufficiently certain that above those ephemeral forms, and in spite of the efforts of individuals, the power of reason, of justice, and of freedom shall soar, strengthening with the strength of each year, and fortified by the exercise of private and public morality.

'The offspring of ages, humanity, that ever-moving and ever-changing, multiplied being, sums up all human existence; and all things earthly, from the empire that crumbles into dust, to the heart that breaks in its agony, are absorbed in its vast recipients, and modify it with their substances and their energies. Hence, death is but an ascending transformation; and the life of nations a time-mark in universal life—a stray leaf from a majestic tree—a page from a speaking volume, by which we explain the import of the present and the future, through the revealings of the past.

Such is the position which man occupies in the panorama of history, the philosophy of which, applied to the civilization of mankind, we mean to glance at in this disquisition. But before proceeding with the subject, we would bespeak the indulgence of the society for one general remark, which may not be unnecessary to a better understanding of the views which we shall unfold, in the fulfilment of the duty kindly assigned us by the partiality of our associates. That axiom—for it may justly be so termed—is, that the development of society is wrought, not in a direct, but in a spiral, line. Humanity, in its ascending course, has, not unfrequently, recoiled upon itself, the more forcibly to act against some sudden and intervening obstacle. It fulfils its destinies by two distinct and alternate movements—one of creation and the other of destruction. The latter—in the midst of which the former order of things is annulled, whether by reason of its dangers or its insufficiency—obtains till the advent of the providential hour, that reveals a new principle of order to the world. Thus the existence of humanity,

under changing phases and forms, kindling up but to be quenched, and quenched again to kindle up and reproduce the magnificent phenomena of civilization, is aptly illustrated by the fabled phoenix of antiquity. It is, in its essence, like the flaming bush of the Genesis, which burned, yet could not be consumed.

Let us, however, open the volume of history itself—the archives of mankind, and record of their progress and their checks. It is a marvellous book, rife with eloquent and enduring lessons—a great and living work of the Deity, made manifest through the works of his creatures—a real, yet intelligent, tower of Belus, where all the nations that had, or have, existence on earth come for their lost centuries and tongues—their morals and their customs—their reverses and their triumphs. One hasty and eagle glance at that great chartulary of the human race, and see how it reveals the work of civilization, successively spreading its inroads over the world.

In the Dedalian fabric of the primitive ages, the historian stands as the solitary pilgrim, journeying through regions unexplored. The darkness of night stoops over the earth—many winding paths delude his footsteps—the treacherous flare of the marsh meteor flickers before his eyes; while some dim and far-off star throws a reluctant light on his dubious road. And, indeed, what do we know of the old human races that have colonised this earth? We, who are ignorant of the precise history of the great moral and social facts, on which the whole structure of our civilization is based? We, who gropingly catch at the origin of the three primordial facts—in the absence of which no

others would exist—the institution of property, marriage, and individual liberty? What do we know of the Æthiopian civilization of ancient Axuma, the city of granite and of porphyry? What of royal Meroë, who founded Ammon, Memphis, and Thebes; and whose homeric renown is lost in the shadows of antediluvian civilization? What of the protestantism of the primitive world—of the commotions which outbreak with the rearing of Babel, in the confusion of tongues, ideas, religions, individuals, and societies? Who has handed down the deeds of those Nembrods, who superseded the old, by the new, doctrine—the doctrine of the Serpent—who shivered the tabernacles of God, and reared up the temples of Baal—who, to the age of light, substituted the age of Chronos, with his orgiastic worship? Whose are the *æs triplex et os trilingue*, the brazen throat and the three-tongued mouth, that shall fling us this forgotten story across the chasm of ages and the roar of revolutions?

Yet, in spite of these drawbacks, no intellectual pursuit, if we except the examination of the laws of reason and of nature, commands a deeper interest than the contemplation of the progressive march of mankind over the globe. If philosophy exhibit man, according to the scope and the perfectibility of his individual faculties, and in the enjoyment of the almost ideal happiness, which he is destined to attain, history reveals him, according to his innumerable manifestations, in the light of reality, bent on the prosecution of that high and ultimate attainment. If we love to lend an attentive ear to the sublime harmonies of creation—to the ineffable melody of mysterious voices wandering

'twixt heaven and earth, now wailing in gentle Æolian murmurs, and again breaking out in a full chorus of wild accordances—how much more deeply should we dwell on the secular voice of humanity sending abroad its cry of civilization; how much more intensely should we linger round the solemn drama of freedom, evolving itself under the providential action of God? From the east to the west—from the Persian conqueror to the Corsican adventurer—we see crowns that topple, and sceptres that break; form after form of civilization rolling into the abysm of time; nations, thundering in their majesty or moaning in despair, tottering round the banquet of freedom, or ground down by the car of despotism.

Viewing history under the aspect of present usefulness, the science is of unquestionable advantage to all the members of society who aspire at a higher degree of moral and intellectual culture. With the statesman it is a portion of his most essential knowledge; and this because the principles of political philosophy, when all is told, are but the systematised results of the salutary or fatal experiences of nations. To the warrior it furnishes the most effective lessons, and holds up the most perfect models of imitation. The churchman derives from it immense treasures of practical wisdom, high morality, and redeeming doctrines. The legist it inspires with holy respect for natural and written right, and for the fundamental maxims of social order. To the law-giver it reveals the arcana and spirit of political institutions—the relations which these institutions bear to the conditions and wants of the people; and, in the annals of ancient and foreign legislation, supplies him

with satisfactory and lucid points of comparison with modern and domestic laws. Shall I advert to the precious and incalculable advantages that professions, foreign to science, properly so called, may derive from history? Without its aid the merchant himself, the Sannti, the Medici, the Van Halens, the Ouvrards, the Roscoes, and the Hancocks, could neither duly estimate the supreme influence of commerce on the prosperity and civilization of empires; nor discriminate the qualities that are necessary, and the errors that are fatal, to the permanence of commercial states. Under its guidance they soar above the vulgar and narrow spirit of traffic, and conciliate private speculations with the general interests of the community. Free from its wholesome lessonings, the world, to them, is but a vast emporium, a universal mart, where men are destined to buy and sell—their country the counting-house, and lucre their God! History delights in pouring forth the abundance of its teachings to all, who approach it with a pure spirit and a willing sense. To all it stands as the inexorable judge of nations—the eternal protest of mind against matter—the indefeasible testimony of the progressive triumph of human freedom.

But take history from the special attributes which we have assigned to it; carry it into the more extended bounds of the universe; and feed the mental eye with the vast and moving panorama of nations and of centuries. Active portions of mankind, let us question the annals of history on the destinies of mankind; and on the sacred Hestia of antiquity—the hearth-stone of the past—kindle up the torch-light of the future! Considered under this scientific view, history will cease to

be an agreeable pastime, a bare diversion for fancy and for memory. It becomes a high criterion of philosophy, politics, and legislation. It is, at once, the real and substantial code of humanity; and an immense epic in which each nation enacts, in its turn, the part to which it has, by its nature, been assigned. And, in truth, what care we for the noisy discussions of the *agora*, the turbulent vote of the Pnyx, the stately debate of the senate, the battle fields of Attica and Latium, if we have no opportunity of analysing the ideas which nations represent in the economy of universal life?—if we be deprived of the means of ascertaining whether humanity has lost or won—receded or advanced—in its journey of untold centuries?

Noble and great, therefore, is the mission of those who write out the records of history. The true levites of humanity they, whose anointed priesthood may not be shackled by the influences of any predominant system, whether political or religious. No spirit of sect may dim, no interest of caste distort, their mental vision, or corrupt their mature judgments; and it is not the least of the privileges and tendencies of the philosophy of history to disuse the mind from the thralldom of petty opinions and hasty awards. Like the Jupiter of Homer, it scans, with an equally serene and equitable eye, the bloody toils of Mars, and the useful labors of Minerva. However irregular the action of human freedom appear, when compared with the relative march of the world, history judges its movements with fate-like immutability, because its far-reaching look descries in the distance the limits of rational freedom, and the bourne of delirious despotism. *E pur*

*si move!* And yet it moves, exclaims Galileo, on the rotation of the earth. And we, too, in the face of skeptics and tyrants, we exclaim of human freedom: and yet it does move! For we find something within us that will not yield—something that rejects the yoke of nature and of man—something that acknowledges no allegiance but the allegiance to reason and to the laws—something that admits no truce between itself and fatalism. May the conflict last, and forever last! It constitutes the dignity of our nature, and the harmony of the world; and it will last so long as human will shall tower up against the influences of climate and races combined—so long as the name of freedom shall be syllabled by the lips of men!

Three writers have specially investigated the organic laws, under the action of which humanity develops its elements. France in her Bossuet, Italy in her Vico, and Germany in her Herder, claim the honor of having settled the bases of the philosophy of history; for England, in that branch of human science, is thrown far in the shade, in spite of the essays of her Fergusons and her Dunbars—the observations of Miller, or the discourses of Priestley. Bossuet traces up all human events to the secret designs of Providence, and establishes the intervention of the Deity in all the leading actions of mankind. Grasping, in his eagle glance, the succession of ages, he marshals forth the immense train of nations and kings, passing from life to death, under the direction of God himself. Cased in celestial armour, he battles against the interests of earth from the height of religious principles and religious truths. Sounding this terrible lamentation of the Hebrew sage as a war



cry, "vanity of vanities, all is vanity," he compels, before the torrents of his darkly-rushing genius, races and monarchies, with their triumphs and their pomps, and hurls them into one indiscriminate tomb. Empires totter and crumble into ashes—dynasties start up, tyrannize, and pass away—the highways of mankind are cumbered with ruins—the ruins disappear beneath the dust of nations; and Bossuet smiles bitterly on the gloomy pageant, and stamps it with the fiat of Heaven! Vico, supported by the energies of a profound, vigorous, and synthetic intellect, rests the solution of the problem at once on the absolute laws of the mind; and, in this view, stands as the representative of the spiritualism of history. Herder, sagacious and powerful as is his genius, leans to the opposite extreme, and allows too large a share to the action of nature and to external impressions. But equally as profound as the Neapolitan philosopher, he is also as sublime as Bossuet. His philosophy of the history of mankind lulls the soul into a state of mental somnambulism. Its perusal acts with wizard power, and all but translates the reader into an antique and venerable faune, in which the shadowy reminiscences, as of things that have actually been, crowd on his memory from all places and time. The generations of the past press forward in silence, and hang up, on brazen columns, indestructible tablets, on which is chiselled the story of their trials and their conflicts, their sufferings and their hopes. Seated on heaps of bleached bones—the *grandia ossa*—the gigantic skeletons of nations, the prophet-historian removes the veil that conceals realms destroyed, and points out to the glories of races unborn. First are

arrayed, before the eye, through mysterious transfigurations, the patriarchs of Pischdad, the monarchs of Iran, and the Gods of India, surrounded by countless vassal tribes. Through the tremulous and vapory light of primitive history, we follow, with restless curiosity and aching interest, the pompous and solemn march of mankind. Nations hurtle each other; their destinies are linked and severed in turn; whilst the almost omnipotent hand of Herder unravels the imperceptible thread, to which truth binds the traditions of the past. Whether he ascend with you, the millenniums, and drag from their grave the representatives of all time that has been; whether he guide you to the religious sanctuaries of Persepolis, or the aristocratic citadel of Rome; whether he unfold the Pelasgic origins of Greece, or delve into the mysteries of boding Etruria; whether he cull rich flowers on the ashes of empires, or foretell the future splendors of favored races; he every where, and in all cases, holds up and reproduces these eternal formulas of all history—humanity, progress, and regeneration!

Following the giant prints, which these great masters have left in the career of historic philosophy, I should like to expound the trinitarian dogma on which they rest the truth of all history: God, nature, and mind. History thus viewed would not be inappropriately typified by the harp of the Saxon, *minnesängers*, which warbled on three melodious chords: one for love, which is the mind—the other for nature—and the third for God. But my object is to inquire, for the moment, into the spirit of history itself, not to examine systems, as exponents of human actions and human ideas. History

is the logic of the popular mind—a form of universal judgment—the statement of the successive advances of humanity towards physical, intellectual, and moral improvement. Its progress has necessarily produced a struggle between two hostile and rebellious elements—matter and mind—moral power and brutal force. This struggle is coeval with the world. Yet we should not hence infer that it is infinite, though no mortal may predict the period when it shall cease: its duration is folded in the impenetrable veil of the Egyptian Isis. Enough that it has obtained every where, and in all recorded time; but there is an earnest, to us, of success—of final success—in the conviction that, on the whole, the conflict is favorable to man. Of the two adversaries one changes not; the other does, and gains daily accessions of vigor and strength. Nature remains ever the same; while man is hourly asserting some triumph over her immutability. The Alps—those ice-giants—the eternal wardors of sunny Italy—are the same as when the hand of God first sunk their foundations in the earth; and yet the power of man has humbled their haughty crests, and furrowed their rugged sides with an imperishable monument of his patience and his genius. Wind and wave are as fitful and capricious as when God first called them into action; but the steam ship devours the capricious wave, and scorns the fitful wind.

This conflict, it has already been observed, has obtained in every age and clime. Follow the human race, in the long and solemn pilgrimage, which it accomplished, from the chains of the Himalaya to the Scandinavian Alps; from the banks of the Ganges to

the shores of Iceland; and you will find it sternly raging as well among the races, over whose cradle mythology has flung its gold and purple mantle, as among those nations where civilization has stamped its deepest impress: in Hindostan as well as China; in gloomy and material Egypt, as in laughing and spiritual Greece; in mercenary and trafficking Carthage, as in proud and patrician Rome. Among the ancient Medes this duel was, in some measure, represented by the struggle between Ormuzd and Arhimanes; and, according to the religious *myth* of Zoroaster, light must ultimately conquer: that is, ignorance and antagonism shall successively depart, and science and peace achieve the mastery of the world.

The highest degree of perfection to which man is, by nature, destined, grows out of the free and complete developement of his individuality, under the influences of beauty, goodness, and truth, and of his close and brotherly union with his fellow-laborers on earth. The principle of human perfectibility will, therefore, when fully developed, induce a state in which mind and matter, reconciled to each other, will produce a lofty and splendid harmony; in which each special order of mind will find a corresponding object, and a proper sphere of action and usefulness; in which man, instead of wasting his powers in fruitless strifes, will exert them in subjugating material nature; in which the injury, accruing to one member, and profiting no one, shall be considered, by all, as wrong inflicted on the whole of society; in which the shackling of evil passions will put an end to the conflict between virtue and vice—a conflict which will be survived by a generous emula-

tion, only, among the worthy, to do the most good ; a state of rest, which will not be indolent inaction, and a state of action, which shall have ceased to be tumultuous agitation. Then, and then only, shall the promises of the martyr-God be realized. Then, and then only, shall it be truly said of man that he loves his neighbor as himself ; for he will love him as a part of a whole, of which he himself is but another part. Then, and then only, shall Japheth's daring seed, as the Roman lyrist calls us, reconquer the symbolical Aiden, forfeited by the common ancestor, exulting in the choice spoils which they shall have gathered during their centuries of toil in the fields of the arts and the sciences.

Such is the society which awaits the futurity of the world. Under what combination of circumstance and time it shall be fashioned, cannot be ascertained. But history unerringly points to it—reason sanctions it ; while, at the same time, it teaches that it shall be given to man to compass its attainment ; for reason embodies certain invariable principles which, when once asserted and grasped by the people, are used by them as a resting point for further and extended operations. In regard to the principles themselves, their progress will no longer consist in variation, innovation, or change ; but their immutability shall be the basis of all improvement, which, out of this condition, would be liable to the same oscillations and doubts, in the midst of which man has hitherto all but fruitlessly consumed his powers and his strength. Now, those principles will obtain so soon as natural law—I mean the law deduced from human reason, as a criterion of truth—the law inherent to our sociable nature, and harmo-

nising with humanity in all places and time ; so soon as that law, in accordance with the *moral* law of Christianity, shall have every where supplanted the conventional law, which is not based, however we may try to conceal it, upon the general constitution of human nature, but upon the partial interests of individuals, corporations, cities, provinces, and States—upon the necessity of circumstances and the will of the lawmaker.

'That such a society may be realized in a given time we are bound to believe with as much certainty as we believe that we are gifted with the exercise of reason. We must, otherwise, surrender to the harrowing conviction that our appearance here is but an aimless and fantastic farce ; that some evil genius, after having engraved in our nature an instinct of that which is impossible, mocks at our insatiable appetences and our panting efforts round a charmed circle, in which we ever return to the starting point ; that, after all, the tradition of 'Tantalus is no fable ; and that this world is but a vast gehenna, in which perpetual torture and perpetual disappointment are the inevitable lot of man. But how can we withhold our faith from a doctrine co-extensive with the mind, and brilliant as hope itself ? A doctrine for which the Saviour suffered on earth ; and which martyrs and sages have vindicated with their blood and their lives, offered up in testimony of its truth ? Many may view these monitions of history as phantasms of the brain ; or brand rational inductions as Utopian dreams. Let them ! When the first troglodyte issued from his cavern into the social world, and returned to his fellow-intelligent brutes with

the story of civilization abroad, they met his words with derision and scorn! 'They, bound in the darkness of their caves and the filth of their clay hovels, could not realize the splendors of the palace and the comforts of its life. They too—had the supercilious word, invented by their imitators, been known—they, too, would have exclaimed, Utopia! They, whose inch-deep intellect, or whose all-controlling prejudices, stop at the surface of things, and, viewing the evils only which still afflict society, pronounce the notion of perfectibility to be chimerical and vain, they do not intelligently attend to the sober teachings of reason and truth. Man, as a sensual being, belongs to the world of the senses; and that is an habitual state of war between his physical powers—a *bellum omnium contra omnes*—a war of all against all. But, again, man, as a rational being, also belongs to the world of mind; and, as such, he is destined, by the law of his spiritual nature, to subdue the material world. The complement of that law will be to defeat the belligerence of material forces; and, at some providential period, to assert the full and definite triumph of reason, and the consequent prevalence of happiness and peace. Individuals now enjoy that triumph of reason and blessing of peace. Why should they not extend to the collective being called society? To argue that it cannot, is to argue that there is no essential law that will equally apply to man in his individual and social capacity: it is to advance an unnatural, an anti-social, and a degrading paradox: it is to strike at the vitality of virtue, through the freedom of man's will, and

madly to insult the superhuman wisdom of Him who made man the proxy of his power !

Though in our day the spirit may flag—the mind shrink—at the prospect of the decisive battle that shakes the globe ; why, the faculties of the mind must be schooled, the daring of the spirit nerved, for the trial of that “ world-winning battle.” The contest is not as fearful as it seems. On one side the past, with its rusty shield and broken glaive—the past, with all its antipathies, its Gothic abuses and feudal wrongs, summoning, from their leaden coffins, the shades of eighteen centuries of effete ideas and exploded forms, steps down the arena to man the fight ; and on the other the future, with its warm-blooded and warm-hearted generations, instinct with sublime hopes and panting with ardent faith, claiming either hemisphere for a battle-ground, stands prepared to strike for the regeneracy of social man.

The proud result of this meliorating spirit is fatal and inevitable. We cannot doubt, where doubt would be irrational. As in the realm of nature light disperses darkness ; so in the realm of intelligence, the broad glare of science will disperse all mental obscurity. We believe in the holy contagion of virtue. Human opinion, that moral lever that moves the world, and which, unknown or unheeded in the former half of the eighteenth century, has for the last sixty years exerted itself, with successful energy, against the decrepid forms of feudal tyranny, will not stop in its onward course of radical reform and social regeneration.

Those who love man for the intrinsic and innate good, which centuries of bondage, degradation, and



misgovernment have not all obliterated, because its origin is divinely stamped in his heart; those who cherish an abiding faith in the imperishably glorious destinies of mankind, because they rest on the sanction of a heavenly promise; they might desire and invoke the reform of nations, without the ordeal of violence, and through the agency of mind alone. But humanity has hitherto failed in the merely peaceful assertion of its rights. The inauguration of the purest and holiest of doctrines was marked by a sacrifice; and every transcendent social creation seems doomed to the initiation of strife and the baptism of blood.

A tendency, notwithstanding, towards a higher scale of perfection, even under the most repulsive circumstances, is the final end, as it is the primitive and fundamental law, of society. It is the *logos*—the word for which Socrates died, and which, dying, he bequeathed to the social apostles, who have consecrated it with holocausts of lives. Now that progress exists; it is proclaimed by the voice of history and attested by the monuments of time. The principle of antagonism, to which I have adverted, and which was the plague-spot of the institutions of antiquity, is, beyond question, on the decline. Civilization multiplies its forms, and flashes over the universe like a flame of a thousand rays. This fairy of modern days has smitten the Cerberus of despotism with her golden bough; and the Klepht of Greece and Rayah of Egypt feel the power of her intellectual magnetism. The East, slumbering for ages in the tomb, with its vast knowledge, its vast monuments and vast empires, flings off its hoary shroud and swells the banner-cry of nations. The land of the

Pharaohs, and the home of Demosthenes, start from their secular sleep: around the ruins of the Parthenon, and beneath the shadow of the Pyramids, we hear the grateful hum of the public schools. The pen of the writer mocks the sword of the warrior; and we may still exclaim with old Homer: "We thank the gods that we are better than our sires." We thank the gods; and we struggle that our children may one day, I trust, exult in the same boast. It is right, however, not to yield too easily to the convictions of a better order of things. The days of happiness are not yet, when each one shall be able, according to his wishes and his tastes, to cultivate his allotted faculties, and to compass the best means of providing for the future and its wants. The catastrophe of the long and bloody drama, which has stained the theatre of the world, it not yet at hand—a drama, bristling with daggers and axes, racks and scaffolds, and other implements of torture, bloodshed, and death. Not to us, who have seen so many and glorious hopes cropped in the bloom; not to us, who advance, with the carcass of feudalism still lumbering our course; not to us, who, sick with the baseness of the unprincipled and the turpitudes of power, have sometimes looked with a skeptic eye into the womb of time, and reluctantly, agonizingly shrieked, *bottomless perdition*; not to us belongs, as yet, the peaceful security of the Roman's verse:

"Suave mari magno, turbantibus æquora ventis,  
E terra, magnum alterius spectare laborem."

'Tis sweet, while winds convulse the vasty deep,  
'To view, from off the shore, the laboring bark.

There, unfortunately, are nations and men who scorn or misapply the lessons of history; disregard the threat-

ful monitions of gone by ages, and violate rights, purchased at the price of unmeasured blood ; who sacrifice to personal ambition the public liberties, or uphold, by force or fraud, worn out and inadequate systems, institutions, and laws ; nations and men, who oppose the introduction of salutary and gradual reforms ; and, with suicidal fatuity, deepen the gulf that ultimately absorbs them.

Many a great man, no doubt, has been misunderstood by his cotemporaries. Many a reformer has fallen the victim of generous convictions ; and we know that the hemlock and the hyssop are not spared the chosen of Heaven, who lead the front ranks of humanity in the apostleship of civilization. We know that the Redeemer, crucified on Calvary, is the incarnation of every innovating idea, of every attempt at progress and emancipation ; a living and eternal symbol—mocked with a thorny crown by his cotemporaries, and worshipped with enthusiasm by a devoted posterity. We know that Cato tore his vitals in despair, and that More laid his head on the fatal block ; but we know also that, in the universal bible of history is engraved, in fiery characters, one solacing and prominent truth : that nothing great, beautiful, and good, once enacted, has ever been lost or fruitless to mankind. Posterity clings with noble transport to the truths which its predecessors could not or would not appreciate ; and in other periods, and under other circumstances, we witness the triumph of principles and doctrines which might, once, have brought tortures and death to their advocates. But the times are favorably changed. The moral law of humanity is slowly but steadily developing its latent

energies. Prometheus has atoned for his glorious impiety. He indignantly bursts the shackles that bound him to the rock of agony. His voice has shouted away the loathsome vultures that preyed upon his heart. The nobly-daring hand, that filched the fire from heaven, has reached the torch of civilization to the new-born generations, who, like the competitors in the race of the Panathenæa, will commit it to their successors, a bright, radiating, and unquenched beacon-light, that shall guide their footsteps through a futurity of all but boundless happiness.

To those new-born generations—the trustees of the rights and hopes of mankind—specially belongs the better apprehension of the past and the future. They have the power, if the will be not inert. But, to all, the task of advancing the cause of freedom, science, virtue, and happiness, is equally and imperatively assigned. For the truth of it I attest the ashes of the heroes of humanity in every clime, and the monuments of popular admiration and popular gratitude. To you particularly, who evidence a laudable ambition of knowledge, I would now address myself. Do not despair, should you, in your day, as in the days of Socrates, hear the language of skepticism and gloom. You will be told that the world is old, and no better, worse perchance, than when it came fresh and unwarped from the hand of God; that the divine idea is waning from the earth, and the consummation of time is at hand. Repel the inauspicious bodings; they are the favorite weapons of iniquity and despotism. Amid the variations of mere forms, there is something essential and immutable that remains proud, defying,

and indestructible. The world, in which you live, is still the city of God. Civil order and social right, so dearly achieved by your fathers, are still divine with justice and morality. The flame of patriotic feeling and noble thoughts is not quenched. Ours is not a disinherited world: the eternal father, in despite of tyrants, in the treasures of his wisdom, still reserves for unborn generations undying freedom, the goodly patrimony of mankind. Whatever may be our waverings and doubts, in these periods of transition, let us trust in the destinies of man, the progress of mind, and the permanence of liberty. That trust we must pinnacle on the Herculean pillars of history. When mere ideas flit in confusion before you, turn to the facts of humanity and question their import. Invoke the centuries that have been handed to the keeping of time; spell and examine those prophecies of the past, and you may perchance in the surrounding darkness catch a dawning ray of the future. We read in Herodotus of an Asiatic tribe, who promised the crown to him who should first see the breaking of day. All looked intently to the east—all but one, who listlessly watched the opposite quarter of the heavens. And, behold, while the east was still wrapped in gloom, the faint glimmerings of morn were already bleaching the summit of a western tower. Let the east, then, the fountain of light and the home of the sunshine, exult in its beaming glories. Our land, the land of the west—the last asylum of the oppressed—is the watch tower of nations, flooded with the light of mind, freedom, and happiness!











Decidimmed using the Bookkeeper process  
Neutralizing agent Magnesium Oxide  
Treatment Date MAY 2002

**PreservationTechnologies**

A WORLD LEADER IN PAPER PRESERVATION

111 Thomson Park Drive  
Cranberry Township, PA 16066  
(724) 779-2111

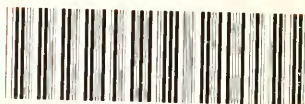


MAR 78



N. MANCHESTER,  
INDIANA

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 009 423 062 7

